GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3557
ANSWERED ON:22.12.2004
REVIEW OF USO POLICY
Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji;Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to review the Universal Service Obligation (USO) policy to reduce USO contribution as well as administrative cost in terms of percentage of adjusted gross revenue;

(b) if so, the response of the Government thereto;

(c) the total revenue generated through USO fund for funding services in non-remunerative and rural areas during the last three years; and

(d) the fund out of that spent in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra for rural telephony during the above period?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The Universal Service Support policy came into effect from 1.4.2002. The collection towards Universal Service Levy (USL) have been Rs.1,653.61 crores and Rs.2,143.22 crores for the year 2002-2003 and 2003-2004, and is estimated at Rs. 2,899.50 crores during the current financial year. The Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund had been allocated Rs.300 crores and Rs.200 crores in financial years 2002-03 and 2003-04 respectively. So far Rs. 200 crore have been allocated for the financial year 2004-05. An additional demand for Rs. 2,500 crore to make up for the previous shortfall and current years` requirement has been sent to the Ministry of Finance.

(d) The amount of subsidy disbursed for Maharashtra Service Area is as under:

YEAR	AMOUNT(Rs.IN CRORES)
2002-03	19.84
2003-04	3.90
2004-05	9.34(till date)

No separate information is being maintained for Vidarbha region.
This includes a sum of Rs.7.10 crores paid as advance for 2003-04